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## Moving Forward

The seven innovations described here are just a few examples of AED's fundamental development principle: to look at problems and design solutions through the perspective of those who are in need. Whether the challenge is to help parents feed a malnourished child, encourage rural drug vendors to change their prescribing practices, or convince ministry officials to invest in a new or ignored health priority, strategies must build on what people value and take into account what *they* perceive as obstacles.

Effective approaches require a combination of science, art, and common sense. The enormous scale of malnutrition and deadly infections such as malaria, AIDS, and tuberculosis, can inspire us to search for Herculean solutions. These challenges can also make us blind to simple and even obvious answers. A washing-machine-like treatment process for bednets that can be operated by a mid-sized factory, or a locally-produced RUTF that can be consumed at home by infants, children, and people with AIDS, will reduce burdens on families, governments, and donors alike.

Change is not easy. Thinking creatively is only the first step. The testing and transfer of approaches—and the nudging of bureaucratic processes—require myriad steps and skills. And AED's goal is to bring about change that can be measured at a national scale, and over time.

We must apply the lessons learned from one decade to the next, and from one intervention to the next. As donors and governments turn their attention once more to tuberculosis, AED is able to apply insights gained nearly 30 years ago to help improve programs. As new threats appear, AED is able to supply tools and methodologies needed for quick response.

Last year AED began to help USAID and other agencies develop strategies focused on behavior change issues surrounding avian flu. Public health and communication specialists have already developed programs targeted to family poultry farmers in Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. To raise awareness among African children and involve them in educating their communities, AED developed a set of educational materials that can be used in a variety of African settings.

The challenges of this disease will evolve as the virus does. But an armamentarium of experience—and alliances with communities, scientists, governments, and international organizations—are already geared for this latest battle. ■



*Zandi's Song is a book AED designed for children and their families about avian flu.*